MAP Hiring Guide
Frequently Asked Questions

Workforce Planning (Sasha Rosen)

1. **Question:** What is workforce planning?

    Answer: Workforce planning is the systemic process for identifying and addressing the gaps between the workforce of today and the human capital needs of tomorrow. It is based upon a set of workforce analyses which provide insight into how agencies can align their workforce to meet human capital goals and objectives that link to the agency's mission and strategic objectives.

2. **Question:** Why is workforce planning important?

    Answer: The workforce planning process is intended to result in planned, programmed actions to fill vacancies and shape the workforce with the right talent, at the right time to meet mission needs. Workforce planning enables an organization to:
    *   Align workforce requirements directly to the agency's strategic and annual plans
    *   Develop a comprehensive picture of where gaps exist between competencies the workforce currently possesses and future competency requirements
    *   Identify and implement gap reduction strategies
    *   Make decisions about how best to structure the organization and deploy the workforce
    *   Identify and overcome internal and external barriers to accomplishing strategic workforce goals.

Job Opportunity Announcements (Brian McCurdy)

1. **Question:** How do I attach the draft document once changes are made, and how will you know which one is the latest version?

    Answer: Place the revised draft in a Word document to attach to the RPA via the "Manage Attachments" radio button. You can indicate the latest version by entering "Revision 1" to the Word document before attaching it in RPA.

2. **Question:** I need to make a change to the duties and/or technical requirements on the cover sheet. Can I do that?

    Answer: Yes; however, we will need to return the RPA to you to make the changes. The Classification team will also need to review it again to make sure the changes do not affect the classification status.

3. **Question:** I need to change the number of vacancies from 1 to 5 for the vacancy. Do I need to change this information in the RPA, or can I send an e-mail requested this change?

   Answer: You can forward an e-mail requesting the change and we will attach it to the RPA.

4. **Question**: How do I know which file is the Draft in RPA?

   Answer: The title of the file for review and approval will have a naming convention similar to the following: Draft for Review, or Reviewer. 2, etc.

5. **Question:** Can we advertise a Transportation Security Inspector (TSI) G/H position?

   Answer: We cannot advertise for a TSI G/H band because the Writing Skills Assessment is a requirement for the G band only, which results in a unique "hiring path" and Candidate Dashboard.

Candidate Evaluation (Mike Heil/Rebecca Levine)

1. **Question:** What are the differences between structured and unstructured interviews?

   Answer: Structured interviews are a type of interview in which all candidates are asked the same questions in the same order to assess the critical general competencies required for the position. These questions are followed up using limited probes designed for each targeted competency and evaluated using a common rating scale. Interviewers must reach consensus on what constitutes preferable answers. In contrast, unstructured interviews are not standardized in terms of questions or ratings scales and do not require consensus on acceptable answers. If you choose to conduct a structured interview, the structured interview bank on HCInsight provides questions, probes and benchmarks for the top 29 competencies found in TSA job descriptions. To access these materials, go to HCInsight, under the "Tools" menu, see "OHC Interview Materials."

2. **Question:** What is a Selecting Official Interview?

   Answer: The Selecting Official Interview is an interview of the BQ candidates, administered at the discretion of the SO. An SO's interview may be structured or unstructured in format and conducted by the individual SO or by a panel. The results of an SO's interview may be used to guide the SO's final decision among candidates referred for potential selection. The SO's interview should not be confused with an interview used at an earlier step in the candidate evaluation process to narrow the candidate pool and identify the BQ candidates from among all basically qualified applicants. For more information, see TSA MD 1100.30-26.

3. **Question:** What is the purpose of a reference check?

Answer: Reference checking will provide you with the details on a candidate's past job-related skills, accomplishments, work habits, and behaviors, all of which are factors to consider in evaluating whether or not your candidate is a fit for the job and the organization. Reference checks are not background investigations, nor are they a forum for the exchange of unsubstantiated information. A complete guide to reference checks is provided in the TSA Handbook to MD 1100.30-26.

4. **Question:** What should I focus on when reviewing resumes?

Answer: In the resume review, you can first identify if the candidate has the basic qualifications required for the job. Basic qualifications should include being able to see the one year of specialized experience or the educational degree (if this is one of the qualification requirements) specified for the position. Then you can focus on whether the candidate has the skills and experience necessary to do well on the job: Do the candidate's accomplishments and contributions in his or her past roles fit the previously defined criteria for job success? You may also look for signs of unsuitability, such as plateaus or declines in degrees of responsibility, or multiple episodes of short term employment.

Veterans' Preference (Ken Gaffey)

1. **Question:** Does TSA provide a hiring preference to Veterans?

Answer: TSA is committed to supporting the employment of Veterans and provides a hiring preference to eligible Veterans. See question #4 below for specific information on how Veterans' Preference is applied at TSA.

2. **Question:** Does TSA follow the policies and procedures from the Office of Personnel Management?

Answer: In 2001, Congress passed the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (P.L. 107-71) which established TSA as an Excepted Service agency. As a result, TSA is not governed by most of Title 5, United States Code, or the policies and procedures established by the Office of Personnel Management. However, TSA does provide Veterans' Preference to eligible applicants (see question #4 below). In addition, certain requirements and qualifications for some of TSA's mission critical positions such as the Transportation Security Officers and the Federal Air Marshals are based in statute and may not be adapted.

3. **Question:** How does a Veteran apply for employment with TSA?

Answer: Our standard process is for applicants to apply directly to open JOAs. TSA JOAs are posted on USAJOBS at: www.USAJOBS.opm.gov or https://tsajobs.tsa.dhs.gov. On the USAJOBS website, the candidate can click on the tab at the top of the page labeled "My USAJOBS" to create an account. This will allow the candidate to do certain things online, such as posting a resume, applying to Federal jobs, and receiving automated job alerts. They may set up automated job alerts to send the candidate an email each time a TSA JOA is posted.

4. Question: How is Veterans' Preference applied at TSA?

Answer: Preference consists of giving qualified, eligible Veterans an advantage over others when recruiting under competitive external procedures (i.e., announcements open to anyone in the general public). Depending on the position being filled and the evaluation method being used, it may mean adding 5 or 10 points to a candidate's earned score or placing the Veteran ahead of other candidates in a ranking category. TSA will provide preference at the point of selection to eligible Veterans who were discharged or released from military service under honorable conditions. Veterans' Preference is only applicable when the applicant applies under external procedures. This means current TSA employees do not receive Veterans' Preference when applying under the internal merit promotion procedures.

Transportation Security Officer positions: TSA provides the broadest application of Veterans' Preference in the Federal Government by applying Veterans' Preference as defined in P.L. 107-71 and to those individuals eligible under the provisions of Section 2108 of Title 5 United States Code (USC). To be eligible for Veterans' Preference under P.L.107-71, a candidate must be a member or former member of the U.S. Armed Forces, and entitled under statute to retired, retirement or retainer pay. Information on eligibility for Veterans' Preference under 5 USC §2108 can be found on the OPM website at www.opm.gov.

All other TSA positions: TSA provides preference at the point of selection to those eligible for Veterans' Preference as defined under the provisions of 5 USC §2108. Information on eligibility for Veterans' Preference under 5 USC §2108 can be found on the OPM website at www.opm.gov.

5. Question: How does an applicant claim Veterans' Preference?

Answer: The applicant must identify their claim for Veterans' Preference on the application and provide proof of their entitlement by submitting appropriate documentation such as a copy of their DD-214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (Member 4 copy). If claiming a disability, they must submit an SF-15, Application for 10 Point Veteran Preference, (this form is available at: http://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/SF15.pdf) and the appropriate documentation from the military service or a current letter of disability from Department of Veterans Affairs.

6. Question: Can military personnel apply for a vacancy while on active duty?

Answer: TSA will consider applications from individuals, not already employed by TSA, who are about to be released from active duty military. Such an applicant will be removed from consideration if not separated or released from active duty prior to the effective date for filling the

position. This does not apply to individuals on terminal leave from U.S. military service. A member of the uniformed service may accept a civilian position if they have performed active duty service and are on terminal leave pending separation or release from active duty under honorable conditions. In addition, current TSA employees who are absent for the purpose of performing military duty may apply for any vacancy announced in their absence and will be given consideration for vacancies as if they were present in their TSA civilian positions.